

The Ward 17 Dispatch

Councilman Charles J. Slife | Fall 2020



Engage with Councilman CHARLES SLIFE

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A Message from Councilman Charles Slife

Since March when the COVID-19 pandemic first arrived in Ohio, Ward 17 has stood together. We've supported our neighbors, shopped at local businesses, and ordered takeout from our favorite local restaurants. Although the journey we're on can be frustrating and worrisome at times, it's clear that this neighborhood sticks together and will make it through.

Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and the State of Ohio have all enacted mask requirements for indoor public spaces and outdoors when social distancing isn't possible. Recently we've learned that masks will be required for kids who attend school in-person. **Nobody likes wearing a mask, but it's a small sacrifice we can make to help our neighbors.**

When mask orders came into effect, many in our community struggled to find a mask



Masks on the Giving Tree. See more on page 2.

they could wear. Knowing this, the Giving Tree Project expanded into Ward 17 in July.

The Giving Tree Project is a partnership between myself, community activist Kira Krivosh, State Senator Nickie Antonio, West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development, and Megan Sorn – a Ward 17 resident and the owner of Imagine That Designs at 15708 Lorain Avenue. On weekdays, reusable cloth masks are pinned to a tree along the sidewalk, in front of 17325 Lorain Avenue (old Steak N'Shake). Those

needing masks can take up to two high-quality masks.

Demand for cloth masks has been high. Since July 17, over 1,500 masks have been given to residents and visitors to our community. If you're interested in donating

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Avoid Costly Sewer Line Repair Bills; Purchase Affordable Sewer Insurance

Houses – they just don't build them like they used to. One of the many benefits of living in Ward 17 is our beautiful older homes. But owning an older home comes with challenges. From time to time, repairs creep up on all of us. Among them is the replacement of water and sewer service lines, the cost of which can come at quite a shock. Fortunately there are water and sewer insurance programs that can save residents thousands of dollars for just a few dollars per month.

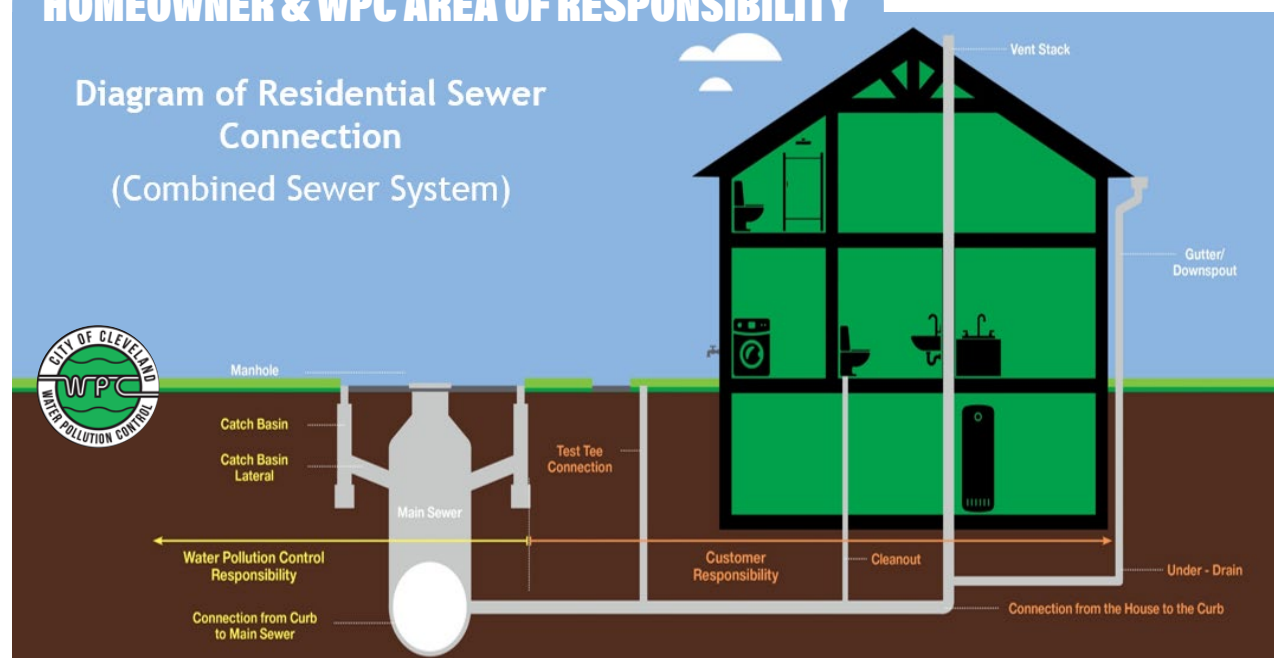
Public water and sewer lines run under all of our streets. Service lines travel across front lawns, connecting homes with those public mains. We all know the adage **out of sight, out of mind**. Below surface, these lines can fail and wreak havoc for homeowners. Repairing or replacing these service lines requires digging in the front yard, causing projects to get expensive fast.

By paying an additional \$3.95/month on water bills, homeowners can insure the cost of locating, repairing and replacing damaged water lines. This program provides 24-hour access to an emergency repair hotline that dispatches licensed and bonded contractors to homes. Once completed, repairs are guaranteed for one year.

Old sewer lines are especially problematic. Prior to the 1980's, sewer service lines were

HOMEOWNER & WPC AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

Diagram of Residential Sewer Connection (Combined Sewer System)



typically made of vitrified clay. The average home in Ward 17 was built in 1943 and clay breaks down over time. In other words, most of us are facing a sewer service line replacement at some point in the future. Prior to needing to be fully replaced, clay lines can also cause problems for homeowners.

As the clay begins to deteriorate, micro-fissures can be created in sewer service lines. When soil becomes waterlogged, especially during heavy spring rains, the water pressure in the soil can force water into the pipe through these micro-fissures and backwards through the pipe. The result: wet basements. Micro-fissures also create problems outside of the pipe. As small amounts of water leak out of the pipe, the soil becomes enriched with oxygen. Tree roots, which don't

naturally go as deep as service lines, can find this oxygen and start to grow in and around clay lines. This causes the clay line to break down even faster.

By paying an additional \$5.49/month on your sewer bill, you can insure up to \$7,500 of a sewer line work. This includes inspections and the flushing of tree roots. When the day comes, the program will also defray the cost of a full replacement. If you think your sewer service line will need attention or replacement sometime in the next 113 years (hint: it will!), this program will save you money!

For more information on the Water and Sewer Line Replacement Programs, go to www.ClevelandWaterLinePrograms.com or call 833-500-2625.

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ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2020

Now is the time to get ready to vote

Voters must be registered by Monday, October 5, 2020 in order to vote in the November 3, 2020 General Election.

Visit www.443vote.us for up-to-date Cuyahoga Board of Elections information.

- Make sure you are registered
- Register to vote
- Get absentee ballot information
- Request a Vote-by-Mail Application

You can also call the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections at 216-443-VOTE(8683) for assistance.

EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING HOURS

November 3, 2020 General Election

Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, 2925 Euclid Avenue

Weekdays	October 6 - October 16	8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Weekdays	October 19 - October 23	8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday	October 24	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday	October 25	1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Weekdays	October 26 - October 30	8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturday	October 31	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday	November 1	1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Monday	November 2	8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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Cleveland's First Giving Tree comes to Ward 17

The Giving Tree Project, which was established to provide free masks to people in a socially distant way (on a tree) took root in Ward 17 on July 17, 2020.

Located at the Kamm's Corner shopping center on Lorain Avenue, the tree offers masks Monday through Friday during business hours. Similar to the Giving Tree program in Rocky River and Lakewood, people are asked to take only one or two masks.

The masks are donated by local businesses and volunteers. It is recommended to hand wash them before using.

"I'm very excited and thankful that the Giving Tree Project has moved into Cleveland from surrounding communities," said Councilman Charles Slife.

"Now that masks are mandatory, we need to make sure that those who need them - and who might not be able to afford them - will be covered."



Pictured above: Councilman Charles Slife (right) with Giving Tree Project co-founder Kira Krivosh (center) and State Senator Nickie Antonio (left)



Composting is a Smart Way to Reuse Organic Waste

Summer 2020 is over and fall is upon us. Across Ward 17, many residents made the most of stay-at-home orders and social distancing by planting new gardens, growing vegetables, and investing in patios and other landscaping. In a few short weeks, the sound of lawnmowers will be replaced by leaf blowers and rakes as we clean up from the summer and prepare for winter. For many, this includes bagging leaves and dragging them to the treelawn for collection by the city. If that sounds like a hassle, consider getting a jumpstart on the 2021 growing season by transforming leaves into free compost.

Composting makes use of food scraps and yard waste to create an organic material that fertilizes plants. It's made up of equal parts browns - dead leaves, wood chips, branches (cut into small pieces), twigs, brown cardboard (remove any tape), toilet paper and paper towel cardboard tubes - and greens - grass clippings, vegetable waste, fruit scraps, coffee grounds, leftover bread. Mix them with water and nature will take over.

To start a compost pile, all you need is a dry spot in your yard that is preferably near a water source and receives at least a few hours of good sun every day. Begin by adding browns and fill in with greens as you collect them. Larger pieces should be broken down to encourage faster decomposition.



Photo courtesy of Danielle Doza and Emily Roll. Follow them on Instagram (@GreenTogetherWestPark) for gardening and sustainability tips!

You should always try to add some brown material when adding greens to keep the pile balanced and healthy. Consider keeping a pile of leaves and other brown material next to the compost pile for easy access. If the pile seems dry, add some water to help spur decomposition. Covering the pile helps to retain moisture. If it seems too wet and starts to smell, that is a sure sign you need more brown material. Keeping that brown/green balance is the key.

Online resources are available from the EPA and Cuyahoga Solid Waste District that can walk you through the composting process. Additionally, the Solid Waste District has compost bins that can be purchased at its offices in Garfield Heights.

Composting is a sustainable way to reuse the waste we generate in our homes. It's free fertilizer that can be used to grow your beautiful garden.

Healthy Homes Program Helps Residents Plan and Fund Home Repair Projects

There are over 8,700 homes in Ward 17. This past summer, West Park was abuzz with the sounds of neighbors building new garages, adding home additions, and performing maintenance on older homes. Yet in many cases, home repairs can be confusing and knowing where to begin can be daunting. And there are certainly locations where code enforcement by the City of Cleveland is needed.

Franchesca Bodnar joined West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development this year as a Healthy Homes Fellow. Her position is funded by the City of Cleveland and three goals:

1. Connecting residents to existing resources that can help plan and pay for home repairs;
2. Accepting, reporting, and tracking Building Code violation complaints; and
3. Assisting WPKND and the City of Cleveland in the creation of a ward-wide housing strategy.



On any given day you'll see Franchesca out in the neighborhood, surveying properties and engaging with residents. She can be contacted by emailing franchesca@westparkkamms.org or by calling 216-252-6559 ext. 1700.

Residents can also submit Building Code violations directly to the Division of Code Enforcement by e-mailing bhcomplaints@city.cleveland.oh.us. If you prefer to submit a complaint anonymously, that can be done by calling 311 or 216-664-3391.

New Yoga studio opens in West Park

Vern Sherrill went to his first yoga class in 2015 and quickly found it to be an enjoyable and healthy way to relieve stress and move inward. Five years later he has opened **InwardCompass Yoga at Five Point (15903 West Park Road)** with the goal of providing a safe and welcoming place to discover and learn yoga. At the studio, Vern holds sessions for all skill levels and multi-class packages that result in cost savings. Discounts are also offered for first responders and healthcare professionals.

Yoga is a series of physical, mental, and spiritual exercises with origins in ancient India that has become widely accepted as a stress reliever and a relaxing form of physical fitness. Sessions at InwardCompass Yoga begin by focusing on breath and posture, building to incorporate movement and strength.



In recognition of the need to protest against COVID-19, pre-registration is currently required in order to attend a class and the number of participants is limited to five. Attendees have their temperatures taken and are required to wear face masks. The studio is cleaned multiple times a day, including before and after every session.

Message Continued

cloth masks to the project, please contact West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development or the Ward 17 office. Also, volunteers with experience sewing can pick up fabric and sewing patterns at the Kamm's Corners Farmers Market on Sundays.

I'd be remiss if I didn't recognize the recent passing of three Cleveland first responders.

Ward 17 resident **Lt. Richard Petras** passed away due to complications from COVID-19 on August 15. Lt. Petras served our community for 26 years. He and his family are longtime residents of West Park. Lt. Petras will be remembered as a dedicated public servant, a committed coach, a gracious neighbor, and a loving husband, father, and son.

As always, West Park came together to honor Lt. Petras. Thank you to the neighborhood residents who decorated Rocky River Drive and Silsby Road, to community members who lined the funeral procession route and stood outside of Our Lady of Angels, and to neighbors for organizing a candlelight vigil.

Cleveland City Council and the West Park community offer our deepest condolences to IAFF Local 93, the Division of Fire, and the Petras Family and thank Lt. Petras for his years of service protecting our community.

The Division of Police lost two officers within 24 hours of each other on September 3-4. **Detective James Skernivitz** was shot and killed while conducting an undercover investigation in the Second Police District. **Officer Nick Sabo** passed away hours later at his home in Lorain County.

City Council and West Park offer our deepest condolences to the Police Patrolmen's Association, the Division of Police, and the Skernivitz and Sabo families and thank both men for their service to our community.

If you are feeling suicidal, thinking about hurting yourself, or are concerned that someone you know may be in danger of hurting themselves, please call Cuyahoga County's 24/7 Suicide Prevention Crisis Hotline (216-623-6888).

Sincerely,

Charles J. Slife

Charles Slife

Councilman - Ward 17



Pictures courtesy of H-6 Photo

Pictures courtesy of H-6 Photo

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WARD 17 COUNCILMAN

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Watch Council Meetings Online

In spite of these trying times, the work of Cleveland City Council continues. Council has been meeting electronically with virtual public hearings and legislative sessions. Go to www.clevelandcitycouncil.org/calendar to find listings of upcoming committee meetings.

You Tube **WATCH (LIVE & RECORDED)**
www.youtube.com/user/ClevelandCityCouncil

TV 20 **WATCH (LIVE)** www.tv20cleveland.com/watch-now/

Councilman Slife serves on the following council committees:
Transportation (Vice-Chair); Development, Planning & Sustainability; Utilities; Rules; Workforce & Community Benefits



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